Rotorcraft Industry Technology Association

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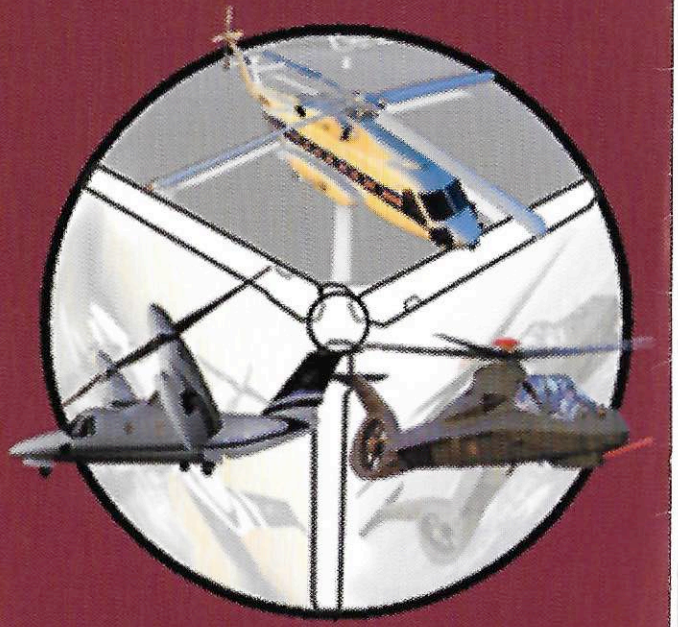


Partners in Rotorcraft Technology Development

RITA's Mission

RITA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to maintaining U.S. preeminence in rotorcraft technology through industry and government collaborative R&D and technology transfer.

Rotorcraft have evolved from an aviation curiosity to an indispensable part of the aviation community. Their vital role in saving lives, keeping the peace, and meeting short-haul transportation challenges is based on the unique capabilities of rotary wing aircraft:

- Zero length takeoff and landing
- Hovering flight
- Omnidirectional motion
- Vertical lift capability

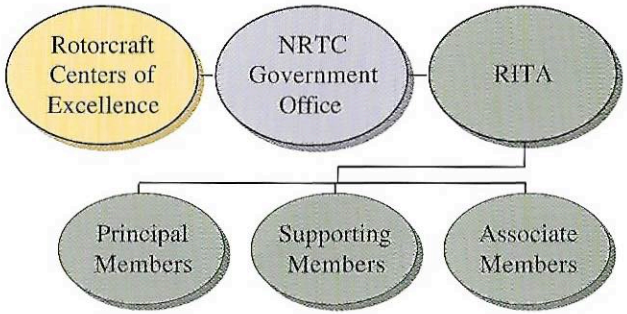
In pursuit of RITA's mission, members engage in activities seeking to:

- Enhance the international competitiveness of the U.S. rotorcraft industry;
- Promote commercial rotorcraft applications in the United States;
- Foster dual military and commercial use of advanced rotorcraft technology; and
- Ensure continued U.S. military rotorcraft superiority.

Organization

RITA activities are governed by a Board of Directors and administered by an Executive Director. A RITA Technical Advisory Committee guides the annual project planning.

RITA is the industry partner of the National Rotorcraft Technology Center, whose government office is located at the NASA Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California. That office is, in turn, supported by NASA, the Army, the Navy, and the FAA. The NRTC government office also sponsors research through programs with designated Rotorcraft Centers of Excellence, educational institutions with noteworthy concentrations of expertise and resources in the field of rotorcraft.



An Executive Committee made up of members from government and industry offers strategic and programmatic guidance to RITA members, who have the opportunity to cost-leverage their technology development plans with government resources. This opportunity is structured under a cooperative agreement which provides enhanced ease of participation for RITA members.

Any RITA member can propose R&D projects consistent with RITA objectives. The RITA Technical Advisory Committee provides feedback on proposals to be refined for ultimate approval by the NRTC government office. Approved projects are eligible for cost-sharing up to 50%, within government budgetary constraints. Supporting committees in the areas of law, licensing, and technology transfer augment the capabilities available to members.

Data and intellectual property rights are governed by an agreement which provides the opportunity to utilize RITA innovations commercially and to support further research through income from licensing fees.

Members

Membership in RITA is open to U.S. organizations with established interests in the advancement of rotorcraft technologies. Current members, by category, are:

Principal Members
U.S. Rotorcraft Manufacturers

Bell Helicopter Textron
The Boeing Company
Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation

Supporting Members
U.S. Rotorcraft Subsystem Manufacturers and Other Industry Entities

Allison Engine Company
B.F. Goodrich
Simula, Inc.
Smiths Industries

Associate Members
U.S. Universities and Nonprofit Organizations

Georgia Institute of Technology *
Georgia Tech Research Institute
Naval Postgraduate School
Old Dominion University
Penn State *
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
University of Alabama
University of Illinois at Chicago
University of Maryland *

* Georgia Institute of Technology, Penn State University, and University of Maryland are designated Rotorcraft Centers of Excellence by the NRTC.

Interested parties may contact the Executive Director to obtain membership information.

Introduction

Since 1995 RITA members have worked collaboratively to further research goals and share technical results among themselves. Technology focus areas are selected to address issues that represent barriers to market growth, such as:

- Process & Product Improvement for Affordability, Quality and Environmental Compliance
- Enhanced Rotorcraft Performance
- Passenger and Community Acceptance
- Expanded Rotorcraft Operations
- Harmonized Civil Certification and Military Qualification

RITA acts as a focal point for industry and university members to interact with their government counterparts. Vehicle integrators have the opportunity to influence the course of research according to a market-driven agenda and accelerate the adoption of new technologies; developers of subsystems and components can explore opportunities for validating advanced technologies; universities can participate in research and steer their research programs in directions relevant to the rotorcraft industry.

Conversely, RITA provides a unique window for industry into the world of research through its partnership with leading federal laboratories and universities with strong rotorcraft research programs. Members benefit from cutting-edge technology developments and a sharing of technical results and experience with industry peers that keeps the U.S. rotorcraft industry abreast of the latest developments and best practices.

The number of research projects has grown from 8 ($1.4M) at RITA's inception to 31 ($18.9M) planned for CY1998. You are invited to sample some of the exciting RITA research projects RITA described on the inside pages.

John F. Ward
Executive Director